

**Amendment to the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1-22 and add claims 25-40 as follows.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-22 (canceled)

23. (Previously presented) A method of compressing an image, the image being having gray scale values, comprising:

(a) dividing the image into quadrants;

(b) determining whether any quadrants can be estimated using a contractive map of the image; and if not, recursively applying (a) and (b) to the particular one or more quadrants that cannot be estimated by a contractive map of the image,

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 23, and further comprising:

measuring the gray scale variation in each quadrant so that each quadrant is either a low variation quadrant or a high variation quadrant.

25. (New) The method of claim 24, determining whether any quadrants can be estimated using a contractive map of the image; and if not, recursively applying (a) and (b) to the particular one or more quadrants that cannot be estimated by a contractive map of the image further comprises:

applying (c), and (d) to the particular one or more high variation quadrants that cannot be estimated by a contractive map of the image.

26. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the gray scale values comprise the intensity image component of a color image;

27. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the gray scale variation in each quadrant is measured using the statistical variance of the gray scale values in the particular quadrant.

28. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein a low variation quadrant has a statistical variance below a predetermined threshold value and a high variation quadrant has a statistical variance above or equal to the predetermined threshold.

29. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein a low variation quadrant has a statistical variance below or equal to a predetermined threshold value and a high variation quadrant has a statistical variance above the predetermined threshold.

30. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the estimate of the particular low variation quadrant comprises the statistical mean of the gray scale values in the particular quadrant.

31. (New) The method of claim 23, wherein the contractive map comprises applying a two-by-two spatial summing filter.

32. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein the high variation quadrant is estimated using a scalar multiple of the contractive map of the image.

33. (New) An article comprising a storage medium having stored thereon instructions, that, when executed by a computing platform, results in compression of an image having gray scale values by:

(a) dividing the image into quadrants;

(b) determining whether any high variation quadrants can be estimated using a contractive map of the image; and

if not, applying (a) and (b) to the particular one or more high variation quadrants that cannot be estimated by a contractive map of the image.

34. (New) The article of claim 33, further comprising:

(c) measuring the gray scale variation in each quadrant so that each quadrant is either a low variation quadrant or a high variation quadrant;

(d) replacing any low variation quadrants with an estimate for the particular quadrant.

35. (New) The article of claim 33, wherein determining whether any high variation quadrants can be estimated using a contractive map of the image; and if not, applying (a) and (b) to the particular one or more high variation quadrants that cannot be estimated by a contractive map of the image further comprises:

applying (c) and (d) to the particular one or more high variation quadrants that cannot be estimated by a contractive map of the image.

36. (New) The article of claim 33, wherein the image having the gray scale values comprises an intensity image component of a color image.

37. (New) The article of claim 34, wherein the gray scale variation in each quadrant is measured using the statistical variance of the gray scale values in the particular quadrant.

38. (New) The article of claim 34, wherein the estimate of the particular low variation quadrant comprises the statistical mean of the gray scale values in the particular quadrant.

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39. (New) The article of claim 33, wherein the contractive map comprises applying a two-by-two spatial summing filter.
40. (New) The article of claim 34, wherein the high variation quadrant is estimated using a scalar multiple of the contractive map of the image.